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■ In my opinion

Boob Tubes & Naked Male Butts

I want to seriously discuss naked male butts for a minute. Well, I don't "want" to discuss them, but it is almost impossible for a social commentator in America not to, considering the events of the last few weeks.

FOX TV — the channel that recently aired the reality show "Who's Your Daddy?" — rejected a Super Bowl commercial because it featured a brief cameo by Mickey Rooney's 84-year-old bare ass. I know what you're thinking: What's the big deal? The less elderly cheek on television, the better, right? Perhaps.

What is troubling to me is that this censorship had everything to do with Fox covering its own exposed ass, still raw from its last Federal Communications Commission spanking of over \$1 million in indecency fines. I guess we know who is FOX's daddy.

FOX also refused to air a commercial for Joe Boxer underwear that featured a cowboy riding bareback, if you know what I mean, until the man's rear end was blurred out, according to The Arizona Republic, despite the fact that the same ad ran on cable TV five years ago without controversy.

If these were the only examples of FOX's paranoia, then we could pay no heed. No harm, no foul. But, as is usually the case with paranoia, FOX's self-censorship quickly went from understandable caution to insane overreacting.

In a repeat episode of the brilliant and recently uncanceled animated sitcom "Family Guy," FOX felt compelled to pixelate the naked cartoon butt of Stewie, the baby. It was a case of No Child's Behind Left. The same episode ran on FOX without pixelation four years ago, in the pre-Janet Jackson era. FOX also pixelated the bare backside of the father, Peter, in another episode.

Naked male cartoon butts have a long and cherished history: from the shower flash of George's nude derrière on The Jetsons to almost every other Bugs Bunny episode. In fact, most cartoon animals don't wear pants. Even the direct-to-video cartoon Bible stories produced



DAVID JAGERNAUTH
CRITICAL MASS

by Hanna-Barbera show Adam and Eve's holy rumps. For us traditionalists, it is sad to see this cartoon staple under attack.

If you think censoring a cartoon was the most ridiculous example of butt-censorship recently, you are obviously not a fan of professional football. After scoring a touchdown against the Packers in the fourth quarter, the Vikings' Randy Moss celebrated by pointing his ass at the Lambeau Field crowd and pretending to "moon" them. Play-by-play guy Joe Buck called the pantomime "a disgusting act," and said, "It's unfortunate we had it on our air live."

Let me reiterate: Moss pretended to pull his pants down.

ESPN refused to replay the incident on Sunday, but reconsidered the decision on Monday. "We decided on a conservative approach, taking a breath," said ESPN spokesman Josh Krulowitz. "In hindsight, we decided to show it in a conservative manner, based on the story and its relevance."

The operative word there seems to be "conservative." Other channels, however, decided on a "crazy as a loon" approach. Channel 7 in Chicago, for example, aired the fake mooning but pixelated the entire display. That's right. They blurred a completely clothed butt.

So there we have it — the end of the line — a finale so unfathomable that it is beyond satire. It is one of those rare moments that break the comedy cliché. This time, it

would be funny if it weren't true.

Is there a lesson to be learned from this madness? Probably not. I've probably completely wasted your time. But since I get paid to draw conclusions, let me offer a couple. One possible lesson is that self-censorship is far more devastating and sinister than actual censorship. I doubt the FCC would have been so cheeky as to fine FOX for a cartoon fanny. FOX, on the other hand, could justify it by saying it was just playing it safe in an unsafe environment. The worse repercussion for the station is to be made the butt of a few jokes (rim-shot, please).

The real lesson in all of this, for me anyway, is that naked male butts have way too much clout in our society. How else can we explain Leonardo DiCaprio's Golden Globe for best drama actor? Even DiCaprio admits it. "That's all it's come down to. My naked butt," he told Entertainment Weekly.

Consider the war in Iraq. It wasn't until Americans saw the naked male butts of tortured Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib that the public outrage reached a large enough pitch to force the government to act.

And consider the current political environment. Distilled to its most basic element, the current culture war is really all about naked male butts. It is why President Bush won re-election. Conservatives must feel that removing all images of backsides from the media will somehow help bring about an end to homosexuality. Thus, they find themselves in the ridiculous position of condemning cartoon nudity. Meanwhile, those of us on the other side of the culture war find ourselves in the equally unenviable position of fighting for the right of Rooney's naked butt.

This is a battle where even the winner loses. So I am calling for a truce. We'll give you Rooney if you give us Stewie, and let's call it a tie.

davidjagermath@dailyemerald.com

INBOX

ASUO: Please stop playing around with my money

How the hell are our elected student leaders "hesitant" to keep the library open during dead week and finals? What's next: student leaders hesitant to turn the lights on in Lillis? These leaders waste money on useless and embarrassing retreats, where they apparently learn absolutely nothing about leadership. Houston, we have a drinking problem.

It's amazingly depressing to see such an implosion of responsibility and fiscal management by people who get paid to serve the student body. My student fees are not a play-pen full of money for you people to toss about as you see fit. How about taking one of the paychecks you extract from student fees and, in light of such inept performance, donate it back to the school. It'll be like a little refund to the students who aren't getting their money's worth from their leaders. Maybe it could go towards a functioning library during finals.

George Yioulos
Senior

'Children' stoop to pranks to express political views

Last November, I was one of the 6 million plus people of this country who decided that President Bush was a better candidate to lead this country than Mr. Kerry. I voiced my opinion in several ways: volunteering at the Lane County Republicans office, registering people to

vote (either way they voted), and by putting many W '04 stickers on my car. Because of my stickers my car had been spit on six times, had cigarette burns on portions of my car, had my antennae bent in half and my car keyed twice.

I ask of you "children" who supposedly are the ones with the bright ideas and the "smart" people about the future of the country, to stop stooping to such a low and childish manor. If you disagree with my position, then so be it. If you agree with the pompous windbag Ted Kennedy in thinking that you are the "real majority," so be it. Six million plus do not agree with you, and neither do I. If you want to hang out by my automobile and discuss politics, I may be so inclined to do so. I did not agree or like anything about Mr. Kerry, however, I never spat, keyed or did anything to deface any property. You only worsen your image by committing these dastardly acts, and you have no right, however upset you are that you lost, to deface any persons' property.

Jason C. Shepherd
Eugene

LTD should use its power for good, not for evil

When I moved from New York City to Eugene two years ago I was delighted to discover that the buses here are well-equipped for wheelchair users and can also transport bicycles. However, there were many problems with the system for someone like me. I don't own a car and

am not able to ride my bicycle year-round. Most of the time I use the bus system to get around. I have had to adapt my livelihood due to the limited service on weekends and evenings. It has not been easy, but I value energy conservation and protection of the environment.

I hope that during these negotiations the needs of LTD management, LTD workers and the public will all be communicated clearly. If there is a silver lining to the conflict, it is that people are paying attention. Let's use the resulting energy and good will to bring about beneficial changes. Personally, I would like to see two things happen: plans to increase bus service so more people in Eugene will choose LTD for their daily transportation and assurance to LTD workers of viable wages and health coverage.

Lynne Schwartz
Eugene

Poetic genius: Anti-Bush advocates chant literary gold

Chants. I love them. Anybody who knows anything about me knows that I love chants. Have you ever seen me not chanting about something under my breath? My life is almost like an ongoing chant show. Chants are awesome. (Yes, I'm being sarcastic).

So, after the inauguration this morning, I decided to flip the channel from my beloved FOX News to C-Span 2. What were they showing? Yes, you guessed it: chants. Some liberal organization set up camp in D.C. to protest the inauguration

of President Bush and, let me tell you, they had some freaking amazing chants. Here are some of my very favorites:

"Bush, Cheney, what do you say? How many kids did you kill today?" (How many kids did you kill today, pro-abortion liberals?)

"George Bush, you can't hide; we charge you with genocide!" (Okay, how about charging Saddam Hussein with genocide? Can we start there?)

"No justice, no peace! U.S. out of the Middle East!" (My vote was for getting the terrorists out of the Middle East ... wait, what? Bush won the elections?)

"Racist, sexist, anti-gay! Bush, Cheney, go away!" (Sexist? Does the name Condoleezza Rice ring a bell? Oh, and she's also black? Hmmh. Funky.)

These are just a few of the very best chants from today's anti-inauguration hoopla. These guys have some amazing skills, I tell you. I can pretty much guarantee you that most anything they can fit to that beat will come out sounding pretty amazing. Seriously. I mean, these chants are so good, I find myself chanting them under my breath even though I support the Bush administration. Rock on, liberals.

Just remember, no matter what you do, no matter how much you chant, no matter how many protest parties you throw, we won. That's it. Today, Jan. 20, 2005, it was made official. Four more years, baby.

Melissa F. Tucker
Eugene

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